

Where We Begin: The Fear of the Lord

Getting focused

It is understood that God is the fountain from which all wisdom flows. The early portion of chapter one points out that you possess ability to assimilate wisdom. Realize wisdom is present whether we accept it and make application of it or not. Therefore, you determine if you will become wise or live foolishly. God is the ultimate source of all things, but your personal decision to receive these words of wisdom will determine the outcome of this study.

God has promised wisdom to those who, by faith, seek it (James 1:5-7). Therefore, we must first focus on this single fact: **the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom** (Job 28:12-15, 20-28).

Godly instruction vs. sinful enticement

Read Proverbs 1:7-9, 10-19, 20-23

A common mistake made as we mature is the failure to recognize the benefit of listening to those who care about us. Following the affirmation of God as the source of wisdom, we are taught to receive the instruction of our father and mother (v. 8). Experience will provide knowledge.

Verses 7-9 display the adorning effect when we obey the commands to honor our father and mother (Exodus 20:12; Ephesians 6:2). Making application of this brings a blessing and honor to our lives.

A contrast is drawn between the two roads in life we can travel. One is that of discretion, understanding, and all that is good. The other is the enticement to engage in things that are motivated by selfish greed. We will encounter both in our lives. Wisdom is determined by the road we choose to travel.

- **Wisdom cries out...**I will make known my words to you (vs. 20-23).
- **Sinners entice...**come with us, we shall fill our houses with precious possessions (vs. 11-14).

Fear, in one sense, is defined as the “instinctive emotion aroused by impending or seeming danger” (New Webster’s Dictionary).

While this emotion will cause one to tremble at the power of God, **fear also means to “stand in awe” or respect.**

Both definitions must be applied to the beginning of wisdom.

The fear of the Lord is one that will bring us to **love and worship Him** as the Almighty Creator.

Memorize and meditate

“My son, if sinners entice you do not consent.”

- Proverbs 1:10

In contrast, a great social ill is disrespect, which leads to a disregard for authority.

The failure in rejecting wisdom

Read Proverbs 1:24-33

The New Testament principle, “God is not mocked, whatsoever a man sows, that shall he also reap,” (Galatians 6:7) is clearly brought to light in this text. The result of rejecting God is certain. When trouble comes, the cry of those who have rejected Him will fall prey to their own deception. The rejection of the truth leads to delusion and confusion.

The text does not imply that God rejects men who come to a knowledge of the truth and repent, but those who have lost sight of reality by rejecting His word (consider Romans 1:20-22, 28). This passage expresses our personal responsibility and the power to choose. Those rejected by God are those who rejected Him (vs. 24-25, 29, 31).

The opening statement of verse 5, “**the wise man will hear,**” holds the key to the promises of peace, protection, contentment, and happiness made at the conclusion of this chapter. These things come only to those who listen.

Questions to consider

1. What determines the difference between the foolish and the wise? _____

2. What criminal activity today mirrors that mentioned in verse 14? _____

3. What is the response of the wise to those who attempt to involve us in things that are wrong? _____

4. Why will God not answer those in trouble in verses 28-30? _____

5. In light of the things God has revealed in this study, how will you respond in prayer to Him? _____
